

ABSTRACT

Acne is treated or prevented by the topical application of compositions containing an alkanolamine such as dimethylaminoethanol, tyrosine, and a sulfur ingredient such as lipoic acid or glutathione. Adjunct ingredients such as fatty acid esters of ascorbic acid, *e.g.*, ascorbyl palmitate and α -hydroxy acids may be included in the formulations. Compositions of the invention may be used alone, or, in many preferable embodiments, in combination with conventional acne medications such as anti-acne products containing salicylic acid, benzoyl peroxide, or a retinoid. In these embodiments, alkanolamine compositions of the invention are applied to affected skin areas first, and then a conventional acne medication is applied. This maximizes the efficacy of the treatment while minimizing skin irritation caused by conventional medications.